



Sectoral Integration in Bahamas

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1. Introduction

Bahamas reported¹ on integration of biodiversity concerns in sectoral plans, policies and projects, including agriculture resources sector five year plan, marine resources sector five year plan, forestry, tourism, the Bahamas national trust strategic five year plan (2008-2013), network of protected areas; sectoral coordination, such as inter-ministerial coordination, legal and regulatory framework; cross-sectoral integration (mainstreaming) biodiversity, for instance, multi-sectoral committees, co-management partnerships, land use project, the Bahamas land use, policy and administration project, cross-sectoral strategies; regional partnerships and projects, such as international agreements, mitigating the threat of invasive alien species in the insular Caribbean, integrating watershed and coastal areas management project, the Caribbean challenge, regional initiative of the Caribbean sub-region for the development of a sub-regional strategy to implement the Ramsar convention; integration of biodiversity in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments; the way forward: enhancing cross-sectoral integration (mainstreaming) of biodiversity in the Bahamas.

Integration of biodiversity concerns in sectoral plans, policies and projects

2. Agriculture Resources Sector Five Year Plan

The Five Year Plan for Agriculture and Marine Resources (2010 - 2014) was developed with the assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United States (FAO) through a Rapid Assessment process. The Rapid Assessment entailed review of existing literature, consultations with key stakeholders and inter-island subsector teams for specific thematic areas. The thematic areas focused on in agriculture were: vegetables, root crops and herbs; tree crops; ornamental horticulture, livestock, agro-processing; land and water. The policy framework for The Bahamas agriculture resources is based on the long term development and conservation of the national agricultural resource base as well as the protection of the country's future capacity to produce.

The specific agriculture objectives are:

- Vegetable, root crop and herbs: Increase in production and productivity of selected commodities for import substitution.
- Tree crops: Develop, expand and improve the existing tree crop production systems.
- Ornamental horticulture: Engagement and intensification of ornamental systems in The Bahamas.

¹ Bahamas (2011). The Fourth National Biodiversity Report of the Bahamas to the UNCBD, Ministry of the Environment, June 2011, 139 pp.

- Livestock: Establish a system of integrated livestock production, allowing for access to markets and based on principles of sustainable development so as to improve livelihoods, food security and animal health and welfare.
- Agro-processing: To support the cottage type processing industries in the sparsely populated Family Islands and encourage and strengthen the links between the commercial agro processors and the farming communities to minimize the periods and levels of gluts.
- Land and water: To promote sustainable use of land and water resources in agriculture.

Management Objectives of the Agriculture Sector Plan for addressing threats to agriculture biodiversity

Invasive Species

An ornamental research and development programme will be established within the Gladstone Road Agricultural Complex (GRAC) with the initial research priority being, to investigate possible invasive species pathways for importations from Florida and mites which affect the Ficus species. Recommendations from the research would be considered for improved legislation and regulatory protocols within the industry.

Diseases

To combat diseases, the DOA will establish experimental investigations in tree crop diseases and production systems in order to provide appropriate technologies. Measures will be taken to improve the Tree crop research capabilities at the GRAC. In addition, a tree crop plant nursery will be established at Bahamas Agricultural Research Centre BARC to multiply selected planting material for cultivation by producers.

Land Conversion

Currently in The Bahamas, even though land may be zoned as agricultural land, the land may be re-zoned and used for a different use. In order to combat this, Department of Agriculture (DOA) is proposing the development of a land evaluation system and land zone map for agricultural lands.

3. Marine Resources Sector Five Year Plan

The policy framework for The Bahamas marine resources is based on the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources and the marine environment for the benefit of current and future generations of all Bahamians (DMR, 2009).

The specific marine resources objectives are (DMR, 2009):

- Ensure that the fishing issues are integrated into the policy and decision-making process concerning coastal zone management;

- Take into account traditional knowledge and interests of local communities, small-scale artisanal fisheries and indigenous people in development and management programs;
- Ensure effective monitoring and enforcement with respect to fishing activities;
- Promote scientific research with respect to fisheries resources;
- Promote a collaborative approach to freshwater and marine management;
- Maintain and restore populations of marine species at levels that can produce the optimal sustainable yield as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors, taking into consideration relationships among various species;
- Protect and restore endangered marine and freshwater species (e.g., marine turtles);
- Promote the development and use of selective fishing gear and practices that minimize waste in the catch of target species and minimize by-catch of non-target species;
- Cooperate with other nations in the management of shared or highly migratory stocks;
- Preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as habitats and other ecologically sensitive areas, especially coral reef ecosystems, estuaries, mangroves, sea grass beds, and other spawning and nursery areas; and
- Develop and increase the potential of living marine resources to meet human nutritional needs, as well as social, cultural, economic and development goals in a manner that would ensure sustainable use of the resources.

A few of the priority areas for development are:

- Creation of a data collection system to provide necessary biological, economic and social data for assessment and management for all major species/fisheries;
- Promote efforts to reduce the amount of Lionfish in The Bahamas;
- Approve a Government policy for aquaculture and provide the legal framework for aquaculture in The Bahamas; and
- Consult with the public to develop a marine reserve network/national marine park network.

Management Objectives of the Fisheries Sector Plan for addressing threats to marine biodiversity:

Lionfish

In 2009, DMR in conjunction with the College of The Bahamas Marine Environmental studies Institute (COB-MESI) developed a National Lionfish Response Plan which has been incorporated as an activity into the 5 year strategic plan for marine resources. Through GEF funding, studies will be conducted on

the effects to lionfish populations and other marine species populations in areas where lionfish will be captured and removed. An educational and outreach programme will also be undertaken to educate people about the policies and regulations that will be developed to manage Lionfish in The Bahamas.

Illegal Fishing

To help combat illegal fishing, The Bahamas intends to conduct additional patrols and investigations during the spiny lobster and Nassau Grouper closed seasons, to address illegal fishing in the southeastern and northwestern areas of The Bahamas. The GOB purposes to develop the necessary diplomatic contacts to reduce illegal fishing/poaching by Dominican Republic fishermen in the southern Bahamas and US fisherman in the north western Bahamas.

Data (Biological, economic, social)

A data collection system is to be fully implemented by 2014 to provide the necessary biological, economic and social data for assessment and management for all major species. A Fisheries Census will be collected by the end of 2011 as part of the dataset. The data will be posted on the DMR website for access to the general public.

Regulatory Review

By 2014, a regulatory review will be completed to ensure that all major fisheries are covered by adequate regulations. Issues such as lionfish, aquaculture, and licensing requirement for certain types of gears and vessels will be considered for incorporation into the legislation/regulations.

4. Forestry

The Bahamas has taken steps to develop a national forestry programme for the sustainable management of all forest resources, by the enactment of the Forestry Act, 2010. The Department of Forestry will be under the Ministry of The Environment. The Forestry Act provides protection to wetlands, endemic flora and fauna and protected trees. The key objectives of the Forestry Act are to:

- Provide a legal framework for the long-term sustainable management of forests;
- Establishment of a Governmental forestry agency;
- Appoint a Director of Forestry;
- Establish a permanent forest estate;
- Declaration of protected trees; and
- Licensing of timber cutting activities.

The Act specifically addresses the following biodiversity concerns:

- Section 4 of the Act under subsections (e) (f) (g) (h) (l) and (m) mandates that the Forestry Plan include resources assessment and continuous monitoring activities.
- Section 4 of the Act under subsection (g) and (h) mandates that the Forestry Plan include these activities.
- Section 5 of the Act mandates that the Director of Forestry develop such plans that included ways and means for sustaining resources.
- Section 8 of the Act classes forest into the following designations Forest Reserves, Protected Forests and Conservation Forests
- Section 9 of the Act specifies how the Forest Management Plans are to be formulated by the Director of Forestry.

This Act mandates that a National Forest Plan be developed every five years to govern management activities, such as harvesting and reforestation measures, prescriptions for fire prevention, wildfire suppression and prescribed burning and soil and water conservation. The GOB is partnering with FAO to develop a five year National Forest Plan. The Department of Forestry has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the BNT. The MOU provides for financial assistance in establishing programmes to protect and manage the protected forest reserves.

5. Tourism

In 1994, a sustainable tourism policy, guidelines and implementation strategy was developed for the Out Islands of The Bahamas by the Department of Regional Development and Environmental Secretariat for economic and social affairs organization of American States. The purpose of the report was to “define policies for all components of the travel industry in order to minimize impact on the environment, restore destroyed environments and protect endangered landscapes and species” (MOT, 1994). The report consists of a series of policies, with goals, objectives and targets, along with a road map for achieving the policy. The policies paper addressed green management of accommodation facilities, EIAs, protection of marine resources, water conservation, sustainable tourism planning and an environmental educational campaign.

The green management of accommodation facilities encouraged hotels to have an environmental statement along with an environmental programme that extended into the local community by discouraging the use of environmentally damaging cleansing agents, and encourage energy conservation through the use of fluorescent light bulbs and low flow water fixtures. The use of locally sourced materials for construction and food was encouraged. EIAs were encouraged as method to assess and preserve the ecological sustainability of the environment. The protection of the marine resources was encouraged by requiring marinas to have pump out facilities. Water conservation was encouraged by setting restrictions on use of freshwater lens and by recycling of the wastewater effluent and grey water. The policy also outlined the formation of a Sustainable Tourism Development Unit. Even though the entire plan was not implemented, MOT has undertaken projects dealing with aspects of sustainable

tourism, such as the Blue Flag Marina Certification Programme, The Coastal Awareness Committee and the Birding Program.

The Blue Flag Marina is implemented through the MOT and BREEF. The Blue Flag Program is a voluntary eco-label environmental certification program which is renewed annually for beaches and marina. The categories in which participants are evaluated are: Environmental Education and Information, Environmental Management, Safety & Services, and Water Quality. The major partners for this initiative are UNEP, UNWTO, IUCN, ILS, ICOMIA, EUCC and EU. Currently, The Bahamas has 3 marinas with Blue Flag Certification, the Old Bahama Bay (1st in the Caribbean) (5 years), Atlantis (4 years) and Cape Eleuthera Marina (2 years).

The National Coastal Awareness Committee chaired by the MOTA is a group of stakeholders drawn from the private and public sectors, with an aim to educate the public on the threats to our coastal environment. Some of the activities of the project involve radio and television ads, national school competitions, field trips for children to various ecosystems, radio and television awareness programs and coastal clean-ups and exhibitions.

The Bird Watching Programme is an initiative between the MOT and BNT. A draft manual is being peer reviewed. The manual will be used to train birding guides. Some of the topics covered in the manual are how to conduct birding tours, identification of birds and trees in which birds nest.

In 2005, a sustainable tourism project for small hotels was undertaken by The Bahamas Hotel Association. Funding was provided through a grant from the Multi-Lateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank. The project's main objective was to improve the competitiveness of 10 islands that have been designated as pilot destinations in The Bahamas. The end result of the plan is to obtain a new mix of diversified tourist products and packages appealing to specific markets such as heritage eco, cultural and nature tourism. In Exuma, linkages were created between the farmers and the small hoteliers. As a result of the linkage, farmers started producing some of the products required for the small hotels, allowing them to purchase local goods.

6. The Bahamas National Trust Strategic Five Year Plan (2008-2013)

The Bahamas National Trust (BNT) was established in 1959 by an Act of Parliament for the protection of the environment. The BNT is a unique collaboration of the private, scientific, and government sectors, and is the only non-governmental organization to manage a country's entire national park system. The Vision of its Strategic Plan is a "Comprehensive system of national parks and protected areas, with every Bahamian embracing environmental stewardship" (BNT, 2007). The Plan outlines three primary programmes (National Park Management, Public Education and Environmental Advocacy) and three support programmes (Membership growth and Fundraising, Financial Development and Institutional Development) all to be implemented. The goals of the projects are as follows:

- National Park Management – To effectively manage the nation’s system of parks and protected areas by creating general management plans for two additional parks per year during the next five years and by implementing programmes to reduce the impacts of invasive species.
- Public Education - To inspire greater environmental stewardship through diverse educational programmes by implementing a public awareness programme for the sustainable use of wetlands, by creating an accessible and comprehensive reference library on The Bahamas environment and by developing materials and teaching resources in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other agencies.
- Environmental Advocacy - To advise decision-makers on ways to balance economic development with natural resource protection by collaborating with others on critical environmental issues and by making recommendations to the appropriate governmental agencies on environmental issues.

7. Network of Protected Areas

Several agencies assist in the management of protected areas in The Bahamas. The DOA for the Wild Bird Reserves, the DMR for the Marine Reserves, the MTE for Conservation of Forests and the BNT for the system of National Parks. From the Protected Area Management Effectiveness report (2009) the following protected areas were identified as facing the most threats and pressures are North Bimini, South Berry Island, Exuma Marine Reserve – Jewfish, Lucayan, Inagua and Abaco and that the relatively secure and unthreatened protected areas include Moriah, Exuma, Andros Reef, Andros Crab, Rand, and the New Providence protected areas. Currently, there are no sustainable financing plans in place that support the national systems of protected areas. However, the National Parks that are under the management of The Bahamas National Trust receives \$1.25 Million annually from the GOB and raises the rest of its budget through grants, membership fees and private donations.

The existing marine protected areas in The Bahamas comprise approximately 154,011 hectares, spread over 10 national parks and three marine reserves (BEST, 2009a). They include coastal and open ocean sites, inclusive of seabird nesting sites, turtle nesting beaches, coastal mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs and spawning aggregation sites. Species protected as a result of these areas include, but are not limited to, the Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*), Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) and West Indian Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) and endemic Rock iguanas (*Cyclura* spp.).

In 2000, the Minister responsible for Fisheries announced the creation of five marine reserve sites North Bimini, The Berry Islands, South Eleuthera, Exuma and Abaco. The intent of the marine reserves are for the maintenance of marine life and habitat in an undisturbed state and for the replenishment of fisheries while the marine parks were created primarily for the purpose of enhancing recreational use of coastal waters. The proposed areas, all fall under category IV, Habitat/Species Management Area, of the IUCN categories for protected area management (Fisheries website).

In addition to the five marine reserves, The Bahamas has nine marine parks, which are managed by BNT, the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park (1958); Moriah Harbor Cay, Exuma; Pelican Cays Land and Seas Park, Abaco; Black Sound, Abaco; Walker's Cay, Abaco; Union Creek, Inagua; West side of Andros National Park; Andros Barrier Reef National Park; and Bonefish Pond, New Providence. The Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park was designated a no take zone in 1986. Casual observation and scientific research demonstrate that the fish are larger and more abundant within the park than outside of the park limits (Sluka et al.). To help sustain the marine resources, The Bahamas has committed to protect and manage 20% of the marine resources by 2020.

Under the coordination of the National Implementation Support Programme (NISP) Committee, a Master Plan for the National Protected Area System was created and has been presented to the GOB for approval. This plan outlines national activities that are to be completed over the next ten years. To facilitate the Program of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA), The Bahamas started a Full Sized GEF Project (2010) – “Building a Sustainable National Marine Protected Area Network” to assist in the expansion and sustainability of the marine protected area network. The goal of the project is to expand protected areas of globally significant marine biodiversity and increase the management effectiveness of the national marine protected area network across the Bahamian archipelago. The three demonstration projects are 1) controlling invasive species (Lionfish) in protected areas (DMR), 2) assessing the impacts of climate change with mangrove restoration (TNC) and 3) building a sustainable tourism model (BNT). The project will develop a sustainable financing mechanism for The Bahamas National Protected Area System (BNPAS) and provide demonstration projects which address specific threats to MPAs. The Sustainable Finance Plan for the National Protected Area System was completed in June 2008 and recommends that a Protected Areas Trust Fund be established and administered by a professional Trustee, such as The Bank of Bahamas Trust Company. The proposed Master Plan and Funding Mechanisms have been presented to the GOB for approval, optimistically before the end of 2010.

Sectoral Coordination

8. Inter-Ministerial Coordination

In July 2008, The Ministry of the Environment was established. It has the overall responsibility for coordination of environmental management activities in The Bahamas. Four departments within the Ministry share various responsibilities. The Bahamas Environment Science & Technology (BEST) Commission is responsible for protection, conservation and management of the environment and manages relations with the National and International organisations on matters relating to the Environment. The Department of Physical Planning is responsible for land use planning and review of environmental impact assessments. The Port Department is responsible for maritime affairs and the Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) is responsible for scientific research and environment control. However, several other government ministries, departments, statutory organizations and NGO's have varying responsibilities for different aspects of biodiversity management (Table 1).

9. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Bahamas has a cadre of legislation, which fragments the management of environmental issues among several public agencies. In 2010, the Forestry Act and the Planning Subdivision Bill were passed by Parliament. The Planning Subdivision Act, requires EIAs be completed for projects that may likely have adverse impacts on the environment. The Forestry Act establishes forest reserves, protected forest and conservation forest. Table 2 provides key features of the legislation and the applicable Agencies.

Cross-sectoral Integration (mainstreaming) Biodiversity

10. Multi-sectoral Committees

The Bahamas has many agencies that share the responsibility for national resource management. The BEST Commission sub-committees bring together experts from relevant agencies. The sub-committees are: National Implementation Support Partnership (NISP), Biodiversity, Climate Change, Science & Technology and Wetlands. The BEST Commission itself needs to be strengthened.

The NISP Committee was established in 2004 to implement the Programme of Work on Protected Areas. The Committee consists of The BEST Commission, DMR, BNT and TNC. A gap analysis, a management effectiveness plan, a capacity and needs assessment, a sustainable finance plan and a master plan for protected areas has been completed. The Master Plan with the incorporation of a Trust Fund mechanism has been presented to the GOB for approval.

Table 1: Institutions and Legislation based on Biodiversity Management

Subject Area	Name of Legislation	Institutions Responsible
Urban Planning	Town Planning Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Physical Planning • Dept. of Local Government
Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penal Code • Forestry Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry Section (Ministry of the Environment) • Dept. of Agriculture • Dept. of Local Government
Agriculture	Agriculture and Fisheries Act Animal Contagious Diseases Act Plant Protection Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Agriculture • Dept. of Fisheries • Forestry Section (Ministry of the Environment) • Customs • Dept. of Local Government
Crown Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands Surveyors Act • Forestry Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Dept. of Agriculture • Bahamas National Trust • Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation • Water and Sewerage Corporation • Ministry of Housing • Dept. of Local Government • Office of The Prime Minister
Beaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Planning Act • Conservation and Protection of the Physical Landscape Act • Coastal Protection Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Physical Planning • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Port Department • Dept. of Local Government • DEHS
Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahamas National Trust Act • Wild Birds Protection Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahamas National Trust • Dept. of Agriculture

Subject Area	Name of Legislation	Institutions Responsible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry Act • Plant Protection Act • Water and Sewerage Act Fisheries Resources and Jurisdiction Antiquities Monuments & Museums Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMR • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Water and Sewerage Corporation • Dept. of Local Government • AMMC • Clifton Heritage Authority
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Animals Protection Act • Wild Birds Protection Act • Plant Protection Act Marine Mammal Protection Act Fisheries Resources and Jurisdiction Wildlife Conservation and Trade Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahamas National Trust • Dept. of Agriculture • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Royal Bahamas Police Force • Dept. of Local Government • DMR
Marine Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and Fisheries Act • Fisheries Resources (Jurisdiction and Conservation Act) • Continental Shelf Act • Merchant Shipping (Oil and Pollution) Act Conservation and Protection of the Physical Landscape Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Marine Resources • Royal Bahamas Defence Force • Royal Bahamas Police Force • Bahamas National Trust • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Port Department • Local Government
Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health Act • Water and Sewerage Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Environmental Health Services • Water and Sewerage Corporation • Dept. of Local Government
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Sewerage Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Sewerage Corporation • Forestry Section (Ministry of the Environment) • Dept. of Local Government
Land Use Development	Conservation and Protection of the Physical Landscape Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Physical Planning • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Dept. of Agriculture • Ministry of Public Works • Dept. of Local Government
Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and Fisheries Act • Fisheries Resources (Jurisdiction and Conservation Act) Wildlife Conservation and Trade Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Marine Resources • Bahamas National Trust • Port Department • Dept. of Lands and Surveys • Royal Bahamas Defence Force • Royal Bahamas Police Force • Customs • MOE • DOA • Dept. of Local Government

Table 2: Legal and Regulatory Framework

ENABLING LEGISLATION	AGENCY	KEY FEATURES
Continental Shelf Act, 1970	Department of Marine resources (administration); Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) (monitors and enforces)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protection, exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf
Coast Protection Act, 1968	Port Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides power to carry out works for the protection of the coast (Minister responsible for Ports and Harbours) ➤ Mandates publication of specific maintenance work being conducted ➤ Provides a recovery mechanism from owners of land abutting the coast for coastal maintenance work
Archipelagic Waters and Maritime Jurisdiction Act, 1993	Department of Marine Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delineates the archipelagic waters and exclusive economic zone of The Bahamas
Roads Act, 1968	Ministry of Public Works & Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Governs the removal and possession of sand from coastal areas ➤ Establishment and control of public roads

ENABLING LEGISLATION	AGENCY	KEY FEATURES
Local Government Act, 1996	Ministry of Lands and Local Government	➤ Govern solid waste collection in the Family Islands
Freeport Bye-Laws Act, 1965	The Grand Bahama Port Authority	➤ Regulatory oversight of sanitation and hygiene within the Grand Bahama Port Area ➤ Conservation of water in the Grand Bahama Port Area
Water and Sewerage Corporation Act, 1976	Water & Sewerage Corporation	➤ Development and control of water supply and sewerage facilities and related matters; ➤ Regulates the granting of licenses ➤ Designation of water and waste control areas ➤ Protect water resources
Environmental Health Services Act, 1987	Department of Environmental Services	➤ Regulatory oversight and disposal of solid and liquid wastes ➤ Regulatory oversight of emission or discharge of contaminate or pollutant into the environment ➤ Facilitates a tipping fee for solid waste and environmental levies for some imported goods
Ministry of Agriculture (Incorporation) Act, 1993	Department of Agriculture	➤ Provides the Minister of Agriculture powers to acquire, hold, lease and dispose of agricultural land
Agriculture and Fisheries Act, 1963	Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources	➤ Establishment of protected areas ➤ Management of Botanicalal Station ➤ Prohibits export of cave earth or guano ➤ Governs produce exchanges and packing houses ➤ Grants powers to inspect, seize and arrest
The Wild Life Protection and Trade Act, 2004	Ministry of Agriculture	➤ Regulates trade in protected plants and animals ➤ Establishes a National Advisory Committee for the management and enforcement of wildlife protection ➤ Governs the export and import of species listed in the Appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
Marine Mammal Protection Act, 2005 Marine Mammal Protection (General) Regulations, 2005	Department of Marine Resources	➤ Protection and conservation of marine mammals ➤ Governs facilities with dolphins in captivity, and marine mammal research ➤ Governs the export, import, transport and selling of marine mammals
Sportfishing Regulations	Department of Marine Resources	➤ Regulates licensing, method of fishing, type of equipment and catch limits for specific species
Fisheries Resources (Jurisdiction and Conservation) Act, 1977	Department of Marine Resources	➤ Establishment of exclusive fishery zones, protected areas, fisheries access agreements ➤ Regulates local and foreign fishing licensing ➤ Governs fish processing establishments, fisheries research, fisheries enforcement and the registration of fishing vessels ➤ Provides for conservation measures such as prohibiting the use of any explosive, poison or other noxious substance for the purpose of harvesting marine resources; gear restrictions; close seasons; size restrictions of any fishery resource ➤ Creation of new regulations for the management of fisheries as and when necessary (Minister responsible) ➤ Prohibits taking, having in one's possession, buying or selling any marine turtle, any part of a marine turtle and marine turtle eggs ➤ Protects the nest of a marine turtle
Fisheries Resources (Jurisdiction and Conservation) Regulations	Department of Marine Resources	➤ Prohibits fishing or molesting for marine mammals ➤ Limits the size of the sponges ➤ Governs aquaculture and sport fishing licensing
Wild Animals (Protection) Act, 1968	Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources; Ministry of the Environment	➤ Governs the removal and export of wild animals such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild horses (on Abaco Island) and any member species (<i>Equus Caballus</i>) • Agouti or Hutia (<i>Geocapromys ingrahami</i>) • Iguana (<i>Cyclura species</i>)
Wild Birds Protection Act, 1952	Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources Ministry of the Environment	➤ Govern hunting licenses and wild bird research ➤ Provides for conservation measures such as closed seasons; kill and catch limits ➤ Designation of wild birds protected areas and appointment of game wardens

ENABLING LEGISLATION	AGENCY	KEY FEATURES
Plants Protection Act, 1916	Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Govern the importation, detention and examination of plants ➤ Control of pests and diseases injurious to plants
Conservation and Protection of the Physical Landscape of The Bahamas Act, 1997	Department of Physical Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protects physical landscape from environmental degradation, regulates filling of wetlands, drainage basins or ponds, prohibits digging or removing sand from beaches and sand dunes ➤ Regulates excavation, landfill, quarry/mine operations and indiscriminate land clearing and issuance of permits ➤ Management of protected trees ➤ Levies fines for illegal movement of sand, trees, vegetation and excavation
Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) Act, 1976	Port Department; DEHS (nearshore)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Governs the provision concerning oil pollution of navigable waters by ships
The Bahamas National Trust Act, 1959	The Bahamas National Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Management of parks and protected areas; ➤ Protection of places and buildings of historic interest
Planning and Subdivision Bill, 2010	Department of Physical Planning Ministry of The Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensuring appropriate and sustainable use of all land ➤ Providing for the orderly sub-division of land ➤ Protecting and conserving the natural and cultural heritage of The Bahamas ➤ Governs the preparation of Land-use plans for each island, the preparation physical plans, development control and regulation, environmental impact assessment and miscellaneous matters
Registered Land Bill, 2010	Department of Lands & Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Govern the registration and transfer of land
Animal Protection and Control Act, 2009	Animal Control Unit of the Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establishes an Animal Protection and Control Board ➤ Protecting animals from cruelty
Forestry Act, 2010	Ministry of the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Management of the National Forest Estate ➤ Development of management systems compatible with conservation ➤ Protects rare and endangered species and threatened ecosystems ➤ Requires an EIA for consideration of an alternate land use ➤ Issues permits for harvesting of protected trees ➤ Governs forestry on private lands

11. Co-management Partnerships

The Government of The Bahamas has partnered with various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity ecosystems. The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) continues to work with The Bahamas National Trust (BNT) to implement the “Master Plan for The Bahamas National Protected Area System.” The DMR partners with TNC and BNT for meeting the requirements of “The Caribbean Challenge” and the “UN convention on Biological Diversity.”

The DMR partnered with The Bahamas Marine Exporters Association and TNC for the Lobster Fisheries Implementation Project (FIP). The project resulted from an independent pre-assessment of the lobster fishery against Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification standards. The pre-assessment showed that the lobster fishery would not be likely to attain MSC certification. As a result the FIP was developed to address the various shortfalls in the way the fishery is managed with hopes that MSC certification and better management result. Multiple areas are addressed as a part of the FIP including data collection, outreach, monitoring, enforcement, stock assessments and management. The hope is that MSC certification will allow the Bahamian lobster fishery to maintain access to foreign markets and at minimum result in greater assurance that the fishery is well managed.

The GEF Full Size Project – “Building a Sustainable National Network of Marine Protected Areas” is being implemented by BEST, DMR, TNC and BNT. The project life is four years and funding is provided by GEF.

12. Land Use Project

“In 2010, a new Planning and Subdivision Act 2010 was enacted by Parliament, which consolidated all aspects of town planning and subdivisions; including regulations for a revised and restructured Department of Physical Planning and Town Planning Committee, a new Appeals process and public participation. A key component of this new law is provisions for land use plans to be prepared for every Family Islands. The Act sets out what shall comprise a land use plan, which must be consistent with the National Land Use Development Policies (First Order, 2010).”

To assist in creating the land use plan, first order existing land use maps were created from the compilation of all existing land use and land resources datasets and information in the country, that was collected from relevant governmental agencies. For large tracts of land privately owned, the owners were consulted to ascertain their plans for developing their landholdings. Designations such as Agriculture, Forest, Green Spaces, Conservation Forest, National Parks, Restricted Development/mangroves, Heritage Site, Industrial, Residential and Commercial were assigned to the zoning maps. See Figure 3.2 for the zoning areas assigned for New Providence. One of the major outputs of the project is the creation of land use and zoning maps, which would be accessible online to accompany the Land Use Plan. Maps will be created for all of The Family Islands.

13. The Bahamas Land Use, Policy and Administration Project (LUPAP)

The LUPAP project began in 2005 and ended in October 2009. The project’s goals were to improve the efficiency of land administration and land information management in The Bahamas, prepare modern land legislation and policy guidelines for the GOB, and thereby contribute to the improved use of land resources in The Bahamas. The four main components of the project were: 1) land administration modernization (LS); 2) land information management (and the re-activation of the BNGIS Centre); 3) the development of national land issues and policy guidelines (LS); and 4) a PCU management – crown land policy study, crown surveys & GPS (LS). The project was implemented by the Department of Land Surveys (LS) and the BNGIS Centre (Component 2 Land Information Management only).

An “Initial Global satellite” system was established, as part of a new geodetic infrastructure, for all types of surveys across the 5 major islands, as well as the development of a new datum (WGS 84 ITRF05 replacing the old North American datum of 1927) was created under LUPAP Component 2. A National GIS Strategy was conceptualized in consultation with the Geospatial Advisory Committee which promotes the vision for a comprehensive Bahamas Spatial Data Infrastructure (BSDI), along with draft legislation for the BSDI with BNGIS as the lead agency.

Under LUPAP Components 1 and 3 executed by the Lands & Surveys Department land use issues and policy guidelines have been created, but are underutilized in the planning process. Additionally access to the Parcel Information Management System (PIMS) for New Providence and Grand Bahama which contains information on crown lands, private lands and land use data is somewhat restricted. Although

the LUPAP completed the collection of Geospatial data on Inagua which was widely distributed to all GAC member agencies the data collected on Abaco and Andros was not complete. Maps were produced identifying conservation and ecologically sensitive areas for the entire Bahamas by BNGIS and will be presented to GOB for approval. Even though the BNGIS has been re-activated, the information provided to the BNGIS Centre from custodian agencies such as The Lands & Surveys 2004 ortho-imagery and vector datasets, the Centre is not authorized to distribute this information to the general public. In addition, the government agencies would have to submit a formal request for information. LUPAP was funded by a loan from IDB as well as counterpart funds provided by the Centre.

14. Cross-sectoral Strategies

The Bahamas has not developed other national and sub-national strategies and programmes, such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper or a National Plan for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals but is seeking to conserve its environment and improve coastal management (World Development Indicators, 2003). A Draft National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation was developed and shelved.

Regional Partnerships and Projects

15. International Agreements

The Bahamas is a party to approximately twenty (20) International Agreements that deal with environmental and public welfare issues. From a national perspective, The Bahamas is actively involved in the following Conventions:

- Ramsar Convention – The Bahamas has developed a draft policy on wetlands that seeks to balance conservation and development efforts and promote greater public awareness. The Bahamas has also designated the Inagua National Park a Ramsar site, which limits the type of development in and around the park.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – The Bahamas has developed a National Climate Change Policy and is in the process of completing the 2nd National Report for Climate Change. The report will include a national inventory of anthropogenic emission sources.
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification – A draft National Action Programme to address land degradation has been developed, but has not received government's approval.
- The Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) – In December 2004, the Wildlife Conservation and Trade Act (2004) was passed by Parliament to implement CITES in The Bahamas. This Act allows the Department of Agriculture (the managing authority) to assume responsibility for implementing CITES in The Bahamas. Included among the implementation duties are: the coordination of implementation and enforcement legislation relating to conservation of species, the establishment of a scientific authority to advise on the import and monitor the export of species and the

appointment of a national advisory committee to advise the Minister responsible for agriculture on matters relating to the Act and the implementation of CITES.

- The United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) - The BNGIS Centre continues to play a pivotal role in providing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with GIS technical expertise in conducting desktop studies for the establishment of the Country’s Maritime Border (Published with the United Nations December 2009). The Centre also conducted desktop studies on UNCLOS Article 76 “outer limits’ of the continental shelf and beyond” which resulted in The Bahamas submission of its claim to the Continental Shelf to the United Nations. Further as a member the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Delegation for the resumption of talks with Cuba, The BNGIS Centre continues to perform complex geodetic calculations utilizing specialized modeling software for map reproduction to support The Bahamas position. This work continues with the latest talks taking place in September 2010 with The Republic of Cuba Officials. Future talks with Cuba and the Turks and Caicos Islands are anticipated.

A list of the policies and strategies with key features are provided in Table 3.

16. Mitigating the threat of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean (MTIASIC)

The MTIASIC project is a regional project between The Bahamas, The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia and Jamaica for the development of a regional invasive species strategy based on terrestrial, marine and freshwater invasive species. Each country will design a project to either control/manage or eradicate/prevent the chosen invasive species. The results from the individual projects would provide input into the regional strategy for combating aquatic and terrestrial invasive species in the wider Caribbean. The project has a five year life span from 2009-2013 and is funded by GEF and is implemented by UNEP and Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI).

The Bahamas’ component will consist of a population control experiment, the development of a Lionfish collection and Handling Protocol, research into the lionfish ecology, policy and regulatory reform to aid Lionfish Management and a public education and awareness campaign. The population control experiment will monitor and determine the effect of lionfish removal, frequency on lionfish densities and on native fish diversity and food web structures. The study sites are located in New Providence, Eleuthera, Abaco and Andros. The project provides training of local persons to assist in the underwater assessments of biodiversity at the study sites. The project involves the Department of Marine Resources, some of the local NGOs: BEST, BNT, Stuart Cove, BREEF, TNC, along with international partners from REEF, Simon Fraser University and the University of Oregon.

Table 3: Policies and Strategies

POLICY / STRATEGY	CABINET APPROVAL DATE	KEY FEATURES
The Bahamas National Energy Policy	November 2009	➤ Recommends measures to make the country more energy efficient by utilizing more sustainable sources of energy
National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change	March 2005	➤ Recommends steps to be taken to combat climate change as it relates to agriculture, coastal and marine resources and fisheries, forestry, terrestrial biodiversity, tourism and water resources.

POLICY / STRATEGY	CABINET APPROVAL DATE	KEY FEATURES
National Environmental Management and Action Plan	August 2005	➤ Outlines how consideration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources can be integrated into national decision making through the identification of appropriate administrative structures and involvement of technical and scientific advisors
National Clearing House Mechanism	June 5, 2005	➤ Facilitate the exchange and cooperation with other partners on biodiversity information
Draft National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation	DRAFT	➤ Identifies some issues of concern within local communities and aims to develop activities to remedy the negative effects of land degradation in specific ecosystems.
National Environmental Policy	2005	➤ Highlights five basic principles to guide the environmental policy of The Bahamas ➤ Deals with conserving the diversity, integrity and productivity of natural resources
Road Map for the Advancement of Science and Technology in The Bahamas	March 2005	➤ Presents the Science and Technology Policy ➤ Outlines goals for Science and Technology within the educational system and indicators of progress and achievement ➤ Promotes the popularization of Science, Technology, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development
National Invasive Species (Policy and) Strategy (NISS)	October 28, 2003	➤ Code of conduct for various categories of stakeholders ➤ Recommends five plant species and two animal species for eradication ➤ Recommends sixteen plant species and six animal species for control and management
Pollution Control and Waste Management Regulations	2000	➤ Regulates releases of certain hazardous wastes, contaminates and pollutants ➤ Establishes water quality and air quality criteria ➤ Governs discharge and hazardous waste management permits, packaging and labeling standards
National Oil Spill and Contingency Plan	2000	➤ Manage oil spills in territorial waters to minimize damage to the environment and biodiversity
National Biosecurity Strategy (NBS) The Commonwealth of The Bahamas	DRAFT	➤ Interconnects activities outlined in the NISS and the NBSAP ➤ Highlights priorities and threats to Biosecurity, along with commercial and economic opportunities arising from Biosecurity ➤ Draws attention to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues such as the need to regulate access to and benefits derived from biological and genetic resources in The Bahamas ➤ Establishes a sequenced approach to invasive species control ➤ Outline measures that should be implemented for the Protection of traditional knowledge ➤ Includes a Biosecurity Act for the eradication of effective management of unwanted organisms within The Bahamas, and governance of the entry of all alien organisms. Provides regulations for: management of unwanted organisms and for the control and management of GMO's, conservation and sustainable use of biological resources, access and benefit sharing and protection of traditional knowledge.

17. Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management (IWCAM) Project

The regional IWCAM project commenced in 2005 and involves thirteen (13) of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean. The project is funded by GEF and implemented by UNEP and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The goal of the project is to strengthen the commitment and capacity of the participating countries, to implement an integrated approach to management of watershed and coastal areas. The main issues addressed by IWCAM are diminishing freshwater supplies, degraded freshwater and coastal water quality, inappropriate land use and hygiene and sanitation. Two of the eight demonstration projects are being implemented by The Bahamas. In Andros, the Land and Sea Use Planning for Water Recharge Protection and Management and in Exuma, The Marina Waste Management at Elizabeth Harbor, these demonstration projects commenced in January 2007.

The Exuma project focuses on waste disposal in one of the Caribbean's busiest harbours. This harbour has up to 500 marine vessels per day during the peak yachting season in November through April. A Fixed Activated Sludge Treatment wastewater system with a deep well disposal was installed and is

waiting commissioning before the 2010-2011 yachting season. The facility will receive waste from a pump out boat which operates in Elizabeth Harbour. As an interim measure, Sandals resort accepts the wastewater collected by the pump out boat. Also, 15 moorings for dockage have been installed in Gaviota Bay, Elizabeth Harbor to prevent boaters from docking on sensitive marine areas. A harbour inspection and coastal water quality monitoring program was established by the DEHS. Baseline water quality data has been collected for comparison to water samples collected during the upcoming yachting season. This component is being implemented by the BEST Commission, the Water & Sewerage Corporation, BREEF and DEHS.

Andros is home to The Bahamas' largest freshwater aquifers, vast tidal creek wetlands, and one of the world's largest barrier reefs and to a nursery that supports diverse sea life well beyond Bahamian territorial waters. Andros represents the largest source of freshwater and wetland habitat in The Bahamas. The main threats to the water regime and related biodiversity include pollution of the aquifer (salt water intrusion, agriculture, sewage, unsanctioned domestic use, and puncture as a result of development), encroachment, and destruction of sensitive habitats, dredging, and over-fishing. The Andros project focuses on managing the sensitive coastal and fresh water resources. A small scale demonstration project dealing with water conservation will be completed with the North Andros High School agricultural programme. Composting toilets and mechanical low flow faucets are being installed at the High School. The project will also provide a zoning map for land and sea areas for future use, an Ecotourism Plan, baseline information on the marine and terrestrial resources, maps showing the location of the biodiversity, an economic valuation of resources and biodiversity on Andros, and a water conservation strategy. The TNC conducted an awareness and educational programme to sensitize the community to the project benefits.

18. The Caribbean Challenge

In May 2008, The Bahamas' government alongside leaders from Jamaica, Grenada, The Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, launched the Caribbean Challenge. The Caribbean Challenge is an unprecedented commitment by Caribbean governments to build political support and financial sustainability for protected areas in the Caribbean. The Bahamas will be the largest contributor of protected areas and aims to set aside 20% of the marine habitats by 2020. The goals of the project are to create a network of marine protected areas expanding across 21 million acres of territorial coasts and waters, to establish protected areas and trust funds to ensure sustainable funding and to develop national level demonstration projects for climate change adaptation. The GOB has committed \$2 million dollars for the establishment of The Bahamas National Protected Area Fund. Funding has also been committed by The Nature Conservancy, KfW (the German Development Bank) and other international funding agencies (BNT, 2010a). The aim is to end paper parks in the Caribbean forever. The project is supported by the Global Island Partnership and private NGO's.

19. Regional Initiative of The Caribbean Sub-Region for the Development of a Sub-regional strategy to implement the Ramsar Convention

The goal of the project is to create a sub-regional strategy for implementing the Ramsar Convention by dealing in a comprehensive manner with challenges that climate change, biodiversity loss, socioeconomic development, conservation and wise use of wetlands and coastal areas entail for Caribbean States. The Strategy will provide guidelines for the development and establishment of a coordinated international cooperation framework, the processes and actions for the handling, management and exchange of experiences best practices and information to address in a regional manner the problems and challenges associated to the management of wetlands in the Caribbean Sub-region. This project is in its initial phase.

20. Integration of Biodiversity in Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments.

Under the Draft Environmental Planning and Protection Act of 2005, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations were developed. Even though the EIA regulations were not legally enforceable, foreign developers were required to undertake an EIA and EMP. A review of the documents were conducted by the BEST Commission in tandem to a third party reviewer.

The Planning and Subdivision Bill 2010, provides a mechanism for consideration to be given to environmental impacts from national projects, by requiring EIAs for projects that may likely have adverse impacts on the environment. The legislation mandates that the EIA be circulated to relevant referral agencies for review and comments. However, it does not outline specific strategies for conservation and sustainability of biodiversity. Even though it is not outlined in the legislation, a list of proposed plants for landscaping either from local nurseries or by importation is included in the EIAs. Currently, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not undertaken in The Bahamas.

In Grand Bahama, the Port Authority formed an Environmental Department in March 2006 with the aim of developing a capacity to introduce an environmental regulatory framework within the area designated as the Port Area. Since the formation of the Department, EIA guidelines have been produced for projects of various natures. In addition, guidelines for License applications relating to a myriad of projects which may seek to start business in the Freeport area have also been developed. The License Department has been given a checklist which would determine whether new projects would have an environmental concern/component. If identified as requiring environmental review, a further determination would be made as to whether a Basic Site Assessment, EIS, EIA or EMP is also needed (Wilchcombe, 2010).

All the guidelines consider biodiversity and the impacts and mitigation on the same as a result of whatever activity is being proposed

21. The Way Forward: Enhancing Cross-Sectoral Integration (Mainstreaming) of Biodiversity in The Bahamas

The Bahamas has had numerous studies conducted, adopted policies and enacted legislation which would contribute to the protection of biodiversity in the country. Despite using the various mainstreaming mechanisms to develop these documents, the country struggles with making the findings of the document a reality. Many local environmentalists feel that the environmental protection is considered as an afterthought. Implementation is hampered by lack of technical skills, lack of manpower, lack of equipment and scarce financial resources. Even though these tools exist to assist in decision making for development in the country they are more often than not referred to for guidance. In order to enhance cross-sectoral integration in The Bahamas, the GOB has to make a commitment of adequate financial resources to provide the needed technical skills, manpower and equipment to successfully implement the strategic plans for the agriculture, fisheries, forestry and the tourism sectors. In addition, all of the plans need to have a follow-up mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the plans.

Further, to the five year plan for agriculture, the DOA should ensure that new leases issued on agriculture land have clauses relating to conservation of biodiversity and the use of pesticides. The DOA should promote management of agricultural lands with plant biodiversity in mind. Farmers should be encouraged to set aside a portion of their agricultural land to be fallow for biodiversity conservation and establish protocols for valuable plant conservation. The number of trained people working with appropriate facilities in plant conservation should be increased, according to the national needs. The country should also establish networks for plant conservation activities at the national, regional and international levels.

In conjunction with the five year plan for marine resources, the DMR should conduct ecological assessments and continuous monitoring of selected coral reefs and develop and implement restoration and rehabilitation plans for designated degraded coral reef habitats. EIAs should be required for all mariculture projects. DMR needs to develop an effective evaluation method for site selection of mariculture projects along with the appropriate guidelines for effluent and waste control. Also, The Bahamas should expand the number of inland water ecosystems (e.g. Big Pond) in the existing national system of protected areas.

The Forestry Act, 2010 mandates that a five year management plan be developed for the forestry sector. In order to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, the plan should include the following:-

- Incorporation of the ecosystem approach in the management of the three types of forest areas (forest reserves, protected forest and conservation forest);
- An assessment of based plant sources (e.g. silver tops, cascarilla, etc.) and creation of a management plan for these species;
- Programmes to protect, recover and restore forest biological diversity;

- Plans to promote the sustainable use of forest biological diversity;
- Measures to improve the country's understanding of the role of forest biodiversity and ecosystem functions; and
- Mechanisms to promote access and benefit-sharing of forest genetic resources.

When the NBSAP is updated, and new sectoral plans are developed, many of the guidelines on biodiversity and tourism development (developed by CBD) should be integrated.

Broadly, there is a need for the GOB to develop strategic plans to deal with environmental matters in the Commonwealth.

Further enhancement of cross-sectoral integration in The Bahamas requires increasing knowledge and awareness regarding biodiversity issues among the key decision makers in the various government agencies, policy makers, stakeholders and the school populous. Policy makers need to be sensitized to the issues facing biodiversity and should be educated on the economic worth of biodiversity in the country. Through this insight it will be understood that protection of biodiversity does not hinder economic development in the country, but helps to safeguard the environment and livelihoods for future generations. Agencies need to be educated on their responsibilities for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biological diversity related conventions. This should assist in broadening the mindset of the involved persons. Tourists and locals should be educated on some of the regulations and conservation methods being used to protect biodiversity in the country, such as looking at but not touching the marine turtles or that it is illegal to catch, transport or sell birds captured in The Bahamas. Currently, NGO and private sector partners have on-going educational programmes on biodiversity matters but are limited due to lack of funding.

Implementation is hampered by the lack of communication among and within agencies. There needs to be a shift in thinking from territorialism to integrated thinking and that the sharing of knowledge does not mean a loss of control. Due to the size and archipelagic nature of The Bahamas, enforcement is a vast task. Dedicated resources such as man-power, equipment and money would assist in more efficient implementation and enforcement. To truly make enforcement better, the entire country needs to assist with enforcement. An environmental hotline should be established to direct concerns to the relevant agencies, instead of the current situation where an individual reporting a concern must often endure the frustration of calling several different agencies before locating the appropriate contact.